

*Frankel*

COMMONWEALTH SCIENTIFIC AND INDUSTRIAL RESEARCH ORGANIZATION  
O.H.F.MS  
DIVISION OF PLANT INDUSTRY

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P.O. BOX 109, CITY,  
CANBERRA, A.C.T.

21st January, 1957

Dr. J. Lederberg,  
Assistant Professor,  
Department of Genetics,  
University of Wisconsin,  
Madison 6, WISCONSIN, U.S.A.

Dear Dr. Lederberg,

You may have heard that M.J.D. White who was with us for over three years as a Senior Research Fellow recently left us to return to the United States. By now he will have arrived at Columbia, Mo. Prior to his departure we had many discussions in our Genetics Group of whether and if so how, we should continue seeking out the appointment of Senior Research Fellows and, seeing what great contribution White had made to our thinking and to our work, we were unanimous that this should be so. My colleagues and I have come to the conclusion that at the present time we would do best to try and attract a microbial geneticist in view of the rapid progress in that field and especially in view of the contribution it would make to an understanding of the fundamentals of genetics. I am writing to you about this prior to your Australian visit firstly since we are quite keen to make this appointment reasonably soon - we were thinking that the appointee might come here in, say, six months' time or soon thereafter when we expect our new laboratory for genetics and microbiology will be completed - partly so that you might perhaps be good enough to scan the field prior to discussing it with us.

We have a strong group in genetics, strong in numbers and, if I may say so without presumption, reasonably strong in ability. Most of them are young and highly qualified. Much or most of our work is of course in plant genetics with, but a fair proportion without, application in plant breeding. Langridge, for example, works in biochemical genetics of the small crucifer Arabidopsis thaliana. Our facilities for microbiological work are good - we have a team in microbiology which has all the usual facilities and will be housed in the same building with the geneticists. We have a very strong team in biochemistry, two of whom, Drs. Trudinger and Bromfield, are also microbiologists. We hold regular seminars in various fields of experimental biology and altogether the intellectual and scientific atmosphere is good. The Australian National University with microbiology under Fenner and biochemistry under Ennor is only half a mile away from us and we are keeping up good contacts.

The Senior Research Fellow we have in mind would be somebody well past the Ph.D. status who would enjoy working for a few years in another country and among different people. It might be someone who has had a post-doctoral fellowship and would like to see something of the world before finally settling down. The terms of appointment would be liberal and of course all travel expenses would be paid.

I should be most grateful if you would think about this and let me have any recommendations that come to mind. Michael White of course could give you further information if you wish. He is well informed of this project, as I mentioned above.

With kind regards,

Yours sincerely,

*O.H. Frankel*  
(O.H. Frankel)  
CHIEF OF THE DIVISION

*Pop 921 am.*